

WRESTLING FORUM

OCTOBER 15, 1988

VOLUME III

ISSUE 19

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GREETINGS FROM MEMPHIS

What a weekend! What a city! What fans! We'll be covering the entire weekend later in the issue so for right now we'd better get started on the bulletin or it's never going to get out.

With that in mind we'll take care of the obligatory subscription information that the Post Office makes us put in each issue. Wrestling Forum is published on the 15th and 30th of each month (theoretically) and mailed the following day. Price per issue is \$1.50 and you may subscribe for up to six months maximum at any one time.

We were extremely busy getting ready for the trip to Memphis in between issues this time so we probably owe some apologies. Basically, any renewals that came in the two days before we left did not (or will not) get processed until we get back to Knoxville. And, of course, any that came in while we were gone won't get processed till then either. Because of the convention trip, some of you may have missed last issue. If you really want it, drop an extra buck and a half in an envelope to us and we'll ship it out. Otherwise, you renewed subscription will begin with this issue you now hold in your hands.

We also need to apologize for the number of blank pages in our last issue. For some reason, the printing press likes to run two pieces of paper through at the same time. We take every step we can to make sure that blank pages are caught before they are sent out, but occasionally they slip through. Last time around, more than we expected made it through. Progress continues with the press as last time sixteen of the twenty four pages were produced with the press. We'll keep working towards 100%. My thanks to Jeff Siegel and Steve Sims who made the trip down from Chicago to help put things together last time. Without their help, the bulletin might now have been put out until our return from Memphis! Thanks, guys...and by the way, they didn't even let Lenny carry the ball once during the 45-14 game (exactly five people who read that last sentence will understand it).

Spending the better part of a week in Tennessee really made me feel isolated from the world of wrestling. I wasn't familiar with the TV wrestling schedule in Memphis so all I got to see down there was the WTBS show. I had my VCR with me to record and play back tapes down there so I didn't set it here at home. Add that to the fact that some of my regular sources didn't want to bother me while vacationing, and this issue will be lucky to be half filled with news and rumors.

There has been a ton of response to the jobber who wrote a feature a couple of issues ago, all of it good. Several people have suggested topics for future columns, and one reader suggested that since we are looking to drop the Wrestlers Are People Too column for a while, we replace it with a monthly or bi monthly column by our mystery writer. Hmmm...what do you think?

The subscription drive seems to have come to a screeching halt. We need to add a few readers to our subscription rolls. Remember, the more subscribers, the larger the pool of information we draw from. Mystery date for the past two weeks was October 13 and no new subscriptions arrived on that day. More information in the MISCELLANEOUS STUFF section.

That about takes care of the welcome page. Let's check in with the latest tournament results and the next round with our own gamesmaster Sean Grande...

THIRD ANNUAL WRESTLING FORUM TOURNAMENT by SEAN GRANDE

Here are the results of the quarter finals of the third annual Wrestling Forum Tournament:

Ted DiBiase grounded Owen Hart 16-9.
Barry Windham out lariatied Stan Hansen 14-10 (1 draw).
Randy Savage roughed up Road Warrior Hawk 20-4 (1 draw).
Ric Flair upended Bobby Eaton 17-8.

TOURNEYNOTES: Eaton did better this time out against Flair than the last time he faced him and was shut out...DiBiase's win over Owen was not as surprising as the margin of victory...Road Warrior Hawk heads for the consolation round again...always the bridesmaid, never a bride.

TAG TEAM TOURNAMENT

And here are the quarter final results from the tag team side of the ledger:

Midnight Express squashed the Rockers 23-2
Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson "jumped" past Riki Choshu & Masa Saito 15-10.
The Rougeau Brothers graciously beat the Powers of Pain 15-9.
Road Warriors slaughtered Ron Garvin/Barry Windham 22-3.

SEMI FINAL MATCH UPS

TED DIBIASE vs Barry Windham
Randy Savage vs RIC FLAIR
Owen Hart vs STAN HANSEN
ROAD WARRIOR HAWK vs Bobby Eaton

Midnight Express vs BLANCHARD & ANDERSON
ROUGEAUS vs Road Warriors
ROCKERS vs Choshu & Saito
Powers of Pain vs WINDHAM & GARVIN

rules: Simple. Just vote for the wrestler/team that you think would win these mythical match ups. The wrestlers playing the heel role are listed in CAPITAL LETTERS. Deadline for votes is NOVEMBER 10, 1988. All votes must be sent to:

SEAN GRANDE
700 Commonwealth Ave
Box 701-C
BOSTON MA 02215

Next time the tournament appears we will list career records of all those involved along with all time standings.

One other thing...Ron Lemieux suggested that next year we automatically disqualify Ric Flair and Ted DiBiase so that some new people can have a chance at winning this thing. What are your thoughts? Flair wont he first annual tournament with DiBiase taking the second year honors.

AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

If what we heard in Memphis is true, the Top Guns (Ricky Rice and John Paul) are history here. They were scheduled to start with Memphis but didn't show. If they are gone (and all indications are that they are) their replacements will be Stoney Burke and Johnny Love and they will also be called the the Top Guns. Still no push for Derrick Dukes though. Another mistake brought to you be the senile old bald guy.

The relationship between Memphis, here and World Class surprisingly continues. Any day I fully expect it to go right out the window, but you never know. One thing that may hurt the relationship is the deal the AWA has with ESPN. ESPN had been carrying "Legends of World Class" in the 4:00 pm (Eastern) slot Monday through Friday. It has been replaced by the AWA show. You had to figure that there were just a finite number of shows that WCCW could run in that time slot so the decision was just a matter of course.

On a related subject, Tempo network is carrying old AWA matches from Chicago from the mid seventies. Chicago promoter Bob Luce is the host of the show and from the way it was described to me, it's almost like the old show sponsored by Ben's Auto Sales. It's on at 12:30 am monday mornings eastern time.

One step forward, two steps back. There are plans to run a couple of shows in their home base of Minneapolis over the Thanksgiving day holiday, but trouble looms on the Western fron. The Showboat hotel is a little upset that nine weeks or more worth of TV was taped elsewhere and they will probably not renew the AWA's contract to wrestle there. On the toher hand, a show in Denver is also in the planning stages. It's been about two years since they ran in Denver.

THE THIRD FALL

I'd be willing to bet you've never heard the name Karol Krauser. But I'd bet you'd recognize his face if we reprinted it here.

Karol wrestled quite forgettably in Chicago during the late twenties and through the thirties. Only a handful of hard core Chicago wrestling fans remember him or any of his matches. Books from that era seem to have forgotten his existence, or at least forgotten everything except what he is famous for.

Today, Hulk Hogan is the idol of many young fans. But with the technology of today with video tapes, underground publication and newsstand magazines, Hogan's career will be well chronicalled fifty years from now. Fifty years from now, Hogan, like him or not, will be remembered as one of the greats of our era.

Karol Krauser will not be remembered from his exploits in the squared circle however. No one twenty years from now will be able to tell you what his finishing move was or if he even had one. Few today can. Yet his face was and is still, more recognizable than that of Hogan and that is Krauser's claim to fame. His boyish yet hardened good looks.

During Krauser's career, he caught the attention of a writer named Jerry Siegel and an artist named Joe Shuster. They were looking for a model for a new character they had created. Karol Krauser fit the bill.

In June of 1938, Karol Krauser was drawn wearing a blue suit, a red cape and having a big "S" emblazoned on his chest. Karol Krauser would be ever immortalized as the face of Superman.

And now you know the outcome of the third fall.

#####

MY THANKS TO RON DOBRATZ of Roscoe, IL who supplied this trivia question at convention which I based this third fall on.

SMART FANS

I'd like to make a comment on all this smart fan (anti-pro) crap. I consider myself to be a serious fan as a natural progression of interest. I am also a big baseball fan, and as I grew up, I collected cards, etc, yet always yearned for more knowledge. This is generally gotten through books, magazines, etc.

The more I watched wrestling, the more I wanted to know. This is a natural progression of a quest for more information and knowledge about an interest. In the case of wrestling, this can't be found in books (or very few) or magazines. So I became a serious fan; I knew who was wrestling where (etc) thanks to the exceptional mag the Wrestling News and Tom Burke's Global Wrestling. I was able to recognize wrestlers using aliases in other areas or recognize masked wrestlers. I knew as much as possible after years of reading and viewing experience. Essentially, considering available knowledge, I had Outgrown the sport.

I did not watch wrestling for three years in college in Oxford, OH (Miami University). When I got back into wrestling, it was my senior year at Miami (1982) and Crockett was coming to Cincinnati regularly. A couple of years later, I discovered Bob Closson's Mat Results, then the Observer after that, the Forum. Now, I have much more information available and I enjoy and understand the sport much better.

My point is, I guess, is you can be a "smart" fan yet not a serious fan. The jerk at the matches who yells wrestlers' real names is probably not a serious fan. He does it to show off, or just as likely, he's drunk. "Smart" fans will come and go, but serious fans will be around watching trends for years and years.

-JEFF LYNCH-
-PITTSBURGH, PA-

DIPSTICK NOMINATION

I guess the AWA won't have to pay that many people to show up for Superclash III live in Chicago; with that "naughty lingerie" battle royal they should have little trouble lining the U.I.C. Pavilion seats with as many barroom rejects and dirty old men as possible. The Dipstick of the Month Award to both Verne Gagne and David McLane, please.

-ROBERT SHEPHERD-
-Abingdon, MA-

RANDOM THOUGHTS

Last issue, you made two references to TNT (re: Ted of Lifestyles and the One Muslim Gang skit) and I agree. These bits summed up the nadir (akeem) and the apotheosis (Ted's hilarious Lifestyles' stuff) of the video skit format. The funniest part was Ted and Leech in this gym pretending it's DiBiase's private gym. Right, Ted, every private gym wants 50 identical Nautilus machines.

The Steiner interview with Magnum on Straight Talk was the funniest stuff I've seen this year next to the Ragoos who are hysterical. The bit where they call the ref over and use him to flip out of a hold and the one where Jacques calls for the camera are priceless. I would have loved to have seen the match you saw with the jobber substituting for Ray. By the way, with Bravo and the Ragoos doing this hate-the-USA stuff, how does all this play in Canada? Or is the audience mostly Anglo and they hate the French anyway?

Until you mentioned it, I had never associated the Mr. Perfect and Mr. Wonderful angles. I seriously doubt people will interpret Curt as a substitute Orndorff. Paul was the thick headed, physically gifted smart-ass. Curt's wit and intelligence elevate his bits (and the video skits are truly impressive) far beyond anything Orndorff could ever do.

-BILL KUNKEL-
-woodhaven, ny-

HYPOCRITES

I can't believe all the people who are praising the angle involving Rick Steiner and Kevin Sullivan. No doubt these are the same people who hate George: the Animal Steele's act, yet in reality, aren't the two acts one in the same? Both are acting as feeble minded half retards, yet smart fans pan George and cheer Steiner. As the story line with George goes, at one time he was able to do interviews that were more than grunts and groans. As time went by, he got worse and worse and finally to the point he is now. Steiner on the other hand was presented at first as just your ordinary run of the mill wrestler who went to michigan State. When they put him in the varsity club (don't tell me Kevin Sullivan's spell made him stupid) he became the stereotypical dumb jock. He's nothing more than a baby George Steele with some comedy. No doubt if George would have been a babyface at the beginning of his career, he would have acted something like Steiner is now. Rick can wrestle and due to his age and health, George cannot and this is why people pick on him. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying I don't like Rick Steiner's act, it's just that I think that those who pick on George's act (pick on his wrestling ability, not his character) are a bunch of hypocrits.

-NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST-

EMILY

What's all this business about everyone hitting everyone with a clothesline? Isn't a clothesline a foreign object? Can the referee stop this? I've heard announcers say that a wrestler almost got his head taken off by that one! That would be gross. It is also dangerous. But I do have a question or two... When a wrestler hits another with a clothesline, does he at least take the clothes off first? How about the clothespins? Is the clothesline reuseable after they get done with it?

I'm on vacation this week and I stopped by to see my favorite correspondent Ron Lemieux here in Vernon CT, but his wife Cheyrl said he was at some convention. Oh well. I'll write again soon.

-EMILY LATRELLA-

-New York City-

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

You've heard of group therapy? Well, this is group reporting. As I sit here typing this, we're sitting in a room at the Days Inn in Memphis watching the TBS show. I can't give credit for the comments as they are coming fast and furious. Just sit back and enjoy as you get a ringside seat for about fifteen different views on the Saturday TBS show.

We've decided that Bam Bam Bigelow shouldn't have Sir Oliver Humperdink as a manager. He should have a valet named Pebbles.

Tony Shivone and Jim Ross are throwing one liners around this week like it was a stand up comedian's convention. I guess they must have spent a little time this week with a certain guy who carries around a tennis racquet to get some of their material.

Ric Flair must have set the world's record for name dropping this week. I lost count at about ten names inside of two minutes. Flair is obviously sticking around the NWA for a while as he was putting the bad mouth on the WWF indirectly big time. He also did a thing where he was comparing Bam Bam Bigelow's physique to the other steroid monsters of the NWA. He kept calling him "Fat Boy" and it had us all on the floor. Bam Bam was not on the show as he is completing his tour of Japan at the moment. The fans in the studio went nuts over Flair and actually booed Humperdink later in the show after he completed his interview. The again, most of the fans were holding up four horsemen signs with their fingers and wearing suits. Doe any other promotion have as much trouble getting their heels recognized as heels?

Speaking of the four horsemen, isn't it about time they just started calling them "the horsemen?" More often than not during the past few months they've had either three or two horsemen. Dropping the "four" part would allow them to go with any number they want without having to have the constant pressure of keeping the number at four. This way, they could explain that the Horsemen represent the very elite in the sport. Add one as necessary, or delete one as needed. Since this makes so much sense, I doubt we'll see it as long as Dusty remains in charge.

Jim Cornette got the entire hotel talking with what has to be considered the line of the week, month, century or eon. He was talking about Tully and Arn and said, "They'd rather switch than fight." The phones between rooms were hot after that one!

Let's get on to some of the more persistent rumors of the week. First of all, the sale of the NWA to Ted Turner is closer than it's ever been. Wrestlers were given contracts last week by the TBS people to sign, thus eliminating the problem Crockett had when he bought the WWF. You'll remember that Crockett had assumed that he had purchased the wrestlers' contracts along with everything else until everyone stated walking out on him. This time, the TBS people have brought out contracts guaranteeing money until the current contracts run out which should be sometime in the early spring. Even if the sale goes through and all the I's are dotted and the T's crossed, it will take approximately two weeks for the Securities Commission to approve the sale and transfer of stock to the new owners. There should be no problem if and when that happens but there always seems to be a monkey wrench thrown in at the last minute..

By the time you read this there should be some new talent in the NWA. Going out after some of the names they want should give some indication of how positive they are about the purchase. It looks like Abdullah the Butcher will begin here under the guidance of Paul Jones. This will effectively eliminate his independent career, but then again, Abbbby is not the sort of person to do jobs and he usually doesn't stick around a promotion long enough for it to matter a whole bunch anyway.

I'm back home now and I wish I wasn't because I would have had the chance to check out this next rumor in person. It is being said that Eddie Gilbert may begin here within the next few days. All Eddie said while in Memphis was that he had some interviews scheduled but a lot of us figured World Class or Titan (and we were leaning toward World Class because he might be able to get on there as booker). My Crockett source tells me that Eddie was indeed interviewed in Charlotte and that if he took the job offered, he would begin on TV on Thursday night. This means if he was on TV this weekend, the interview was successful, and if not then negotiations are still going on.

Now I'm going to tell you a little more than I know. Paul E and Eddie are pretty close. You can tell from the way they seem to follow each other around from promotion to promotion. If Eddie doesn't start, I'm going to be wondering if in fact it was because they didn't offer a package deal to him and Paul together. I hardly think that Eddie would be offered the job as booker here, because Dusty is not ready to step down. Perhaps he could be used either as an assistant, or perhaps Mr. Turner is looking down the road a ways to the day that he does replace Dusty. Personally, I'd hate to be in Eddie's position because it's precarious at best. The man he MIGHT go to work for knows that this is the man who could replace him sometime, and perhaps very soon. It wouldn't be hard for Dusty to bury Eddie in this situation and really mess up any future booking plans by purposely destroying Eddie's credibility in the present. And Dusty's track record with anyone who doesn't kiss his fanny doesn't look good. One can only hope that if Turner is set on buying the NWA and he intends to keep on Dusty, that he has someone in the business that can advise him and that he has veto power in booking decisions.

As for Paul E, when we left convention he was to have still remained as booker for Sam DeCero's Windy City promotion, however Paul's job security in that position is also questionable at best. Throughout the weekend I was told he was, then he wasn't. I think that Eddie's interview with Crockett may not only have a lot to do with Paul's position with Windy City, but also with the future of the promotion as well.

This should have given you all a chance to sit in on how a newsletter editor mind works. I just received a call confirming that Eddie was at the TV tapings (arena tapings) which should air Saturday night. The shocker is that he will be a babyface (?!?!). The angle is that he was called by Jimmy Garvin to come in and take over his feud with Kevin Sullivan and the Varsity club for what they did to his "close personal friend." This should dispell the rumors that Paul E will be headed in with him, but then again, things not only can change, people can turn. Perhaps this wasn't the time to bring in Paul. But they had better grab while the grabbing's good. Anyhow...Eddie will be a welcome addition, but I do question the babyface role. Time will tell.

Other word the tapes is that Nikita had a match with Russian Assassin #2 (Jack Victory confirmed under the hood). After a referee bump, Nikita hits him with a sickle, but no ref. The 1st Assassin comes in but Nikita hits him with a sickle as well. Two loads up his mask with a foreign object (his gimmick now) and headbutts Nikita. Paul Jones comes in to revive the ref, but Uncle Ivan comes in with his chain and starts to choke Paul with it. The Russian team (the Assassins that is...I forget we now have two Russian teams) pull Jones to safety only after the dressing room empties the jobbers to pull Ivan off.

To clarify the early paragraph, the final word from convention was that Paul E still held the booker's job for Windy City.

I don't have complete details on this yet, but, the Road Warriors have evidently turned heel on one of the TV tapings. One of the rumors circulating at convention was that they turned on Sting with Dusty sticking his nose in to the angle somehow. I had been told a couple of weeks ago that the Roadies were turning and given details on how they were going to accomplish it with Dusty being the person they turned on. At that time I expressed some reservations as Dusty is not exactly the ideal babyface to turn someone heel on. He's too hate-able. Sting on the other hand would probably be the perfect guy to turn them on because of his immense popularity. During the phone call I was asked who I would turn them against and, you know, I couldn't come up with anyone other than Magnum! Never even thought of Sting. Shows you how much I know!

UPDATE TIME...Since the bulletin is going to be late anyway, I took some time to watch the Saturday TBS show and they ended it with Sting doing a stretcher job, but that's all it showed. This is known as a teaser. They want to make sure everyone tunes in next week plus they want all who saw the show this week to tell friends. It's a ratings game they're playing trying to increase viewership. It's frustrating having to wait to see what happened, but it's the kind of thing they need to do to build their audience back up.

Steiner and the Varsity club got into it again. They go a little further each week and eventually, I'm afraid, they're going to have to turn Steiner completely. I've received a lot of flack from readers by saying that I hoped that they take their sweet time about doing this or not turn him at all. The reason is simple. When they turn him, he will feud with Sullivan and Rotundo and whoever else Kevin can recruit. After that feud runs its course though, what's left for Steiner to do? Not much given the limited role they've given him with the dumb jock role. I would hate to see a talent like Rick Steiner just wasted because they don't have anyone for him to feud with.

I guess this should go in the NWA section since so many guys are a part of it...Learning the Ropes, a sit com that will be syndicated across the country starring Lyle Alzado as a teacher who moonlights as a wrestler will premier this weekend. It has cleared most of the major markets including Peoria so those of you who I had arranged to tape it for me can relax now. I've seen some preliminary reviews on the show and none are very complimentary. I'll include a review of the show next time and anyone else who would like to do one so our readers can compare several viewpoints are welcome as well.

From the reports I'm getting, it looks as though Starrcade will not take place on Thanksgiving night as it has in the past. They will be running a series of shows Thanksgiving week, but Starrcade will actually take place on 12/26. There are rumors of bringing in some big names for the show including Ricky Steamboat, but they would have to make just an exceptional offer to get him to do work on a full time basis. He is currently having a lot of fun running his gym and being with his family, something a lot of us would do if society permitted it. Many other names are being bantied about but most of them are wishful thinking (which is what Steamboat probably is). If you want to know who, just start making up names as I would bet that it has been mentioned at one time or another..

Ron Simmons continues his campaign for the JUST SAY NO program. I'm told this is no act and that Ron is sincerely against drug abuse and will talk at length about it. Ron should be saluted for this. It's nice to see a star taking some time to spread a worthwhile message such as this one.

MEMPHIS

The full details of the convention can be found starting on the but here we need to deal with what's actually going on with the Memphis promotion.

Angles continue around the Fuller-Jarrett feud. While at the TV taping, Jeff Jarrett came out with some bad news for us then proceeded to show a video tape. It showed Jeff getting Fuller's loaded boot off of him. Jeff "suffered" an injury to his leg and the bad news was that a doctor had ordered him to wear a certain boot during his matches. Lo and behold, it was Fuller's boot. Naturally, Fuller was very upset with this development and later in the show, while Brickhouse and Jeff took on Cactus Jack and Jimmy Golden, Fuller hit the ring and they got Jeff down and started to take off the boot. They had me convinced that the boot (that's right, boot, not belt) was going to change hands. In came a group of faces to make the save but they weren't needed. Jeff got back up, loaded up the boot and cleaned house with it. Everything Jeff got perfectly timed it was scary. I've never seen anything come off quite so well. And to think they do this live every week!

Downtown Bruno feuds with Bill Dundee's fourteen year old son Jamie. I'm not sure exactly what brought this next about, but they showed a clip of Bruno being Bill Dundee's valet for a day. Evidently either Bruno or one of Bruno's guys lost a match with that stipulation. The clip they showed had Bruno washing Dundee's car with Dundee spraying Bruno with the garden hose every little bit. It also had Bruno cleaning a dog pen with a popper-scooper. This whole thing led to a match for Monday night where the Jamie would manage his dad and Todd Morton while Bruno had the RPM's. The losing manager would get ten lashes with a belt from the winning manager.

Ricky Rice and John Paul were set to debut on Saturday, but something happened and they didn't show. They walked out of the AWA during the week and were scheduled to start so something may be up with the new found AWA-Memphis alliance blocking them from working here. Still, they were announced as coming in. Don't know what's going on.

Sid Vicious did however make it in. This was his debut, I understand and we had it figured out before we saw him who he was. He's Humongous from Continental without the mask. His gimmick is simple enough...he goes into the ring and absolutely destroys everything in his path. After his match, he was approached by Studd's Stable about joining. He told them (Bruno and Fuller) that he didn't want anybody for partners but he was impressed with their guts for asking. Bruno and Sid went off to discuss things. Sid will end up with them.

One thing that impressed me was the way he moves for his size. This guy is a freakin' monster yet he can throw dropkicks. He's certainly not afraid to work either. Surprisingly enough, he did not appear on Monday night's card in Memphis.

The Lawler-Kerry thing is still going on and one has to wonder just how much longer they can go without actually unifying the two titles. After the match Monday night (see the Memphis results in the convention report) Kerry signed to meet Lawler this coming Monday night in a cage. Kerry and Kevin agreed to this after Lawler let them know he had tricked them into signing it (yet Jerry plays the face...go figure), but they did the obligatory "go crazy - refuse to accept the conditions" after Lawler announced that Jimmy Valiant would hold the key to the cage.

Tommy Rich is doing a biker routine where he now belongs to a motorcycle gang. I don't know how they came up with that idea or even how they justified it when they began it, but the gimmick is going over.

CONVENTION 88
UNITED ASSOCIATION OF WRESTLING FANS

OCTOBER 7 - 11, 1988
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

This report may be a little prejudice because not only did I have a major hand in putting this thing together, I also experienced one of the most entertaining, interesting, and fun weekends of my life. I guess this report could be called "How I Spent my Summer Vacation" as this was the first vacation my family and I had ever taken. I also want to say that because Mary and Kelly went with me, we didn't devote the entire weekend to wrestling but did some sight seeing along the way as well. First stop was Nashville to see some Country music stuff then on to Memphis where we worked the Zoo, Graceland, and a trip to the Mall of Memphis into our plans.

We arrived in Memphis on Thursday night to finalize all the plans and coordinate arrivals at the hotel. About a half a dozen members arrived early to get their sightseeing out of the way early. Thursday night was spent in the bar, drinking mainly sodas, and talking about the convention and the future.

The first monkey wrench was thrown into the works late Thursday night when I called Sean Grande, our president, to make sure of his flight information. Northwest Airlines had screwed up his reservations to the point of cancelling them without telling him. Because of this, Sean was not able to fly in because the cost of flying on a weekend with no advance notice into an airport (Memphis) which is self governed (I don't understand the deregulation, but I did find out that Memphis is one of the most expensive airports to fly into or out of) was prohibitive.

Friday morning our guests began to arrive. It was great finally being able to put faces with the voices that I had previously only heard over the phone. Most everyone looked like their voice sounded (figure that sentence out) and there were only a few who I couldn't place. Dennis Corraluzzo and Jeff Siegel wore New York Met hats and shirts respectively and more than made up for the abuse that Sean would have given me about the Mets-Dodgers playoff series. Thank goodness there were also some true blue Dodger fans in attendance to back me up as well. Other readers like John McAdam and Randy Smith caught Kelly, and me swimming (swimming is not the right verb, but at least we were getting wet in the pool). Another reader messed up my pinball game and I've forgotten who that was but whoever you are, you are forgiven.

Friday night is when things really got rolling. A wine and cheese party was planned for the ballroom but prior to that the game room of the hotel seemed to be the central meeting area. The party was scheduled to begin at 6:00, but I guess hotel employees hadn't finished stepping on all the grapes yet so that was delayed. The party featured one of Jeff Siegel's amny helpful ideas. He had made up not only name tags with our proper names on them, he had also done about 300 tags with names of various wrestlers from all eras. Those name tags were stuck on our guests' backs and they had to go around asking other guests questions about themselves until they guessed who they were. When a person finally guessed correctly, he took the name tag off, put it on his front, and went to get another. It was a great ice breaker and the person who correctly guessed the most was to get a prize. Unfortunately, we left the prize setting on the kitchen table (it wasn't much) and our winner Ron Lemieux of Vernon CT will end up getting a two month subscription to Wrestling Forum instead.

Along with the wine and cheese, we set up a TV and VCR and watched tapes into the night. Channel 5, WMC-TV showed up with a camera crew and did an interview with myself to publicize the group. They showed the segment on the 10:00 news.

When the wine and cheese ran out, many of our guests went out for some "real food" on Beale Street. Others, myself included, stayed behind and ordered pizza. Fifty dollars worth of pizza went pretty quickly, but along with more video tapes, we didn't seem to notice.

Things for the most part broke up around 1:00 am. A bunch of us gathered in the lobby then to await the arrival of Dave Meltzer who finally arrived about 1:30 or so. Dave spent a little time talking and BS'ing with us before heading out on the town himself to find some food. Last time I remember looking at the clock, it was about 2:15am. Friday night was a bunch of fun and (as long as we grade the matches we'll grade the days as well) was a solid B. Highlight for myself was finally shaking hands with and burying the hatchet between myself and John Lanigan at the wine and cheese party (if Sean would have been there I was to have put my arm around John and start to walk out, but before getting to the door, hit him with a clothesline, whereas, Sean would then make the save, turning myself heel and John face. We dropped the idea thought in the name of good taste).

The wake up call on Saturday morning came a little earlier than expected. No, it was right on time, but the night ended up being very short. After break, we made plans to head down to the TV-5 studios for live Memphis wrestling (make that breakFAST in the last line). The hotel had guaranteed us transportation to the studios and back but they had a problem there. It seems that just before we arrived, they had their van stolen (one employee of the hotel told us that it had been "stolen" by the finance company). Instead, a caravan of taxicabs was arranged and we were taken to the studios that way (at our cost, I might add). Strangely enough, one of the cab drivers turned out to be Nate the Rat who managed in Memphis for about three months last year.. Instead of standing in line at the studios, they let us in the lobby of the studios (that was their first mistake) where we waited. This was the way the wrestlers came in and it seemed none were interested in talking. We finally got in the studio after a wait of about 45 minutes and our group filled about half of the available space.

Although the TV matches (broadcast live in Memphis) were mainly squashes (full report on the matches in the Memphis section), the were the most enjoyable set of tapings I've ever attended. Afterward, we got to meet Jerry Lawler, Eddie Marlin (who I found out used to work for Gates Rubber Company where I work), Lance Russell, Dave Brown, Randy Hales (who works behind the scene coordinating everything), and Downtown Bruno for a short time.

Open convention (that is, displays and stuff open to the public) was planned at 3:00 which gave us time to see Dodger pitcher Jay Howell get disqualified for use of a foreign object. Displays were set up by several with offerings of old magazines, classic pictures, current merchandise, fan club publications, etc. This was followed by an auction of wrestling memorabilia including three ring jackets which were donated by Eddie Gilbert and Missy Hyatt. Eddie also sent along some wrestling boots to be put up by auctioneer Tom Burke.

Monkey wrenches started flying all over the place at this point. We had once again been scheduled for the ball room, but the hotel had also booked another group, Parents Without Partners, for the same room. The hotel manager thought that we could all peacefully co-exist in the same room and we did for a whole three minutes before the lady in charge of PWP started laughing at and looking down her nose at wrestling fans. It was at that point that I laughed at her for getting divorced. They had 300 members and we had 60 so we were relegated to poolside for the rest of the night. We eventually moved to the game room because the pool lights didn't have adequate lighting.

Another monkey wrench flew when it was time to head for the airport to pick up honored guest Lou Thesz. Al Costello (of the Fabulous Kangaroos), Tom Burke, Donnie Liabe and I piled into the Gallagermobile and set

out for the Memphis International Airport. The word "International" should have told me something, but this old country boy just figured that picking someone up from the Memphis airport would be the same as picking someone up from Peoria...just go to the airport at the appointed time and wait. Little did I realize that this airport was twice the size of the town that I live in! I didn't have Mr. Thesz's flight number or airline. Tom and Al headed in to search for him while Donnie and I tried to find a place to park and found that police in Memphis have a very limited sense of humor when you pull into a RESTRICTED MILITARY ZONE. To make a long story short (too late for that) Mr. Thesz, being the gentleman that he is, claimed that he wasn't even upset that we were an hour late.

Back at the hotel, the trivia contest got underway with Dave Meltzer, Travis Brautigam of Houston and Memphis prelim wrestler Keith Eric winning spots for the finals. Randy Smith was chosen as an alternate. We learned that a game room was not the place to hold a trivia contest. By this time Sam DeCero, Alan Eppenstein, and Tokyo Bullet Number One had arrived (Two was already there) along with Debbie and Cora Combs. Sputnik Monroe, an old timer who still runs a weekly independent in Memphis at a nightclub, showed up as well and was entertaining us with his stories. Tom Robinson of Clifton Heights PA brought in a tape with nothing but Tiger Mask high spots and all of our illuminaries were caught on film engrossed in this tape. Still, Saturday, with all its problems was fun, but could hardly be considered a success. I gave it a C- with the saving grace being the morning's session at the TV studios.

Sunday didn't start off much better. The disappointed mood of us being booted from the ball room carried over and it was going to take a miracle to turn things around. Open convention was scheduled at 1:00 but no one really had any interest in setting things up. A few people from Memphis showed up, and due to the confused state of things, we didn't even charge them admission. By 3:00 I was dead on my feet and retired to my room for a nap. A short nap. At 4:00 the phone rang and I was wanted to help set up the "press conference" in the ballroom. I guess I should mention that a reporter from the Memphis Commercial Appeal, the local newspaper, showed up prior to this for a story and left with nothing. As I walked out of the elevator, I was greeted by a lobby full of conventioners who were gathered around our special guests for the evening, Eddie Gilbert, Missy Hyatt and Paul E Dangerously. This should have woke me up, but for some reason it didn't. The press conference did.

The only word to describe what happened next was "awesome." Eddie, Missy, Paul, Mr. Thesz and Al Costello were seated at the head table to take questions from our conventioners. Sam DeCero, Debbie and Cora Combs were somehow overlooked by us, and for a while there were some very hurt feelings. We soothed the feelings over and things came out alright. After the press conference (which lasted about 90 minutes with all the guests answering questions with amazing candor), Boyd Peirce, former announcer for Bill Watts took the mike and told a couple of stories to close the activities.

The highlight of the evening was our RING OF IMMORTALS banquet, the UAWF's version of a Hall of Fame. There were a total of 51 ballots cast in the election with wrestlers needing 25½ points to gain induction and managers, announcers, and promoters each needing 17 (members were allowed to vote for three wrestlers but only one from the other three categories each). Inducted as promoters were Sam Munchnick with 23 points and Vince McMahon Sr. with 18 points. Sam DeCero accepted on behalf of both men. Managers inducted were Wild Red Berry with 19 points (accepted by myself) and Ernie Roth with 23 points. Roth's induction was accepted by Paul E. Dangerously.

Lance Russell was on hand for the evening's activities and he presented

the Ring of Immortals induction to a very surprised Boyd Peirce who was the only announcer inducted with 19 points. Boyd accepted the award with a combination of delight and dignity and a trace of a tear in his eye. Naturally, standing ovations preceeded him and followed his acceptance speech.

The wrestlers were inducted with a bit more fanfare. A video was shown of Bruiser Brody taking on Nord the Barbarian from the Amphitheatre a couple of weeks before his death. Brody was elected to the Ring with 31 points. The award was presented by Boyd Peirce who was the first to ever introduce Frank Goodish in a wrestling ring. The award was accepted by Sam DeCero who had just signed Brody to some shows in the Windy City promotin. Sam read from a prepared speech, apologizing because, "Otherwise, I might not make it through." His acceptance was emotion packed and left more than one tear filled eye in the audience.

Following this was a rare video of the Meadowlands battle royal from last year featuring old timers and eventually being won by the next inductee, Lou Thesz (the footage was shot with a hand held but was decent quality). Thesz garnered the most votes with 37½ points and was presented the plaque commemorating the induction by his good friend Al Costello.

The banquet was then ended with the reading of names of wrestlers who had past away during the previous ten months.

After the banquet came a reception for everyone. To estimate that a thousand pictures got taken would probably be a low estimate at that. All of the illuminaries posed with the fans and many fans posed with each other. Some retired to their room to dress more comfortably while others stuck around to hear stories told by the wrestlers present. Once again, video tapes played into the wee hours. Grade for the day...a solid A+ if I do say so myself.

Monday started to wind down. We had a luncheon scheduled with the wrestlers from the Jarrett promotion. The only wrestlers the promotion sent were Downtown Bruno and Terry Adonis. We conducted an impromptu press conference with Debbie and Cora, Sam, Terry and Bruno. Bruno was especially candid, taking shots at rival Paul E. Bruno told us how he had reformed from drinking and then proceeded to run up a bar tab of about ten bucks. Glad he reformed or he might have broken the treasury. Neither he nor Adonis exposed the business, but rather talked in such a way that made us all know what they were talking about.

A membership meeting followed with several fans bringing up some very good points. Constructive criticism was leveled, especially in the choice of picking hotels and most of the suggestions were ones that can be used to improve next year's convention.

Monday night, we went tot he Mid South Coliseum for the regular monday night wrestling card. At this point, it was mentioned by several fans in attendance that they had had sucha good time already that the live wrestling seemed to take a back seat to tall the other activities. I had to agree, but still, wrestling is what we went for. Here are the results of the show.

Scott Steiner pinned Terry Adonis. Adonis received a hearty welcome from our group because he showed up at our luncheon. He didn't quite know how to take this. It was a short opener with Steiner getting the pin off a pwerslam that was well executed. Nothing really special though both put out. 4:31 and a grade of C-.

Cactus Jack Foley and Gary Young beat Cat Garrett and Alen Reynolds. Pretty bad match with lots of missed moves. Absolutely no heat in the building save the UAWF contingent. Foley pinned Reynolds in this short match which kept me awake just long enough to give it a Z (that's one step below an F-).

Phil Hickerson retained the CWA title by defeating Nature's Best Darrel Justin. Justin is super green and Hickeerson couldn't carry the

kid. It went 6:12 and was basically a squash and got an F. At one point, Justin tried to do a backdrop on Hickerson and came as close as I've ever seen to collapsing under the weight of the person being backdropped (not that Hickerson is a lightweight or anything).

Rock and Roll RPM's beat bill Dundee and Todd Morton. Special stip for this match had the loser's second (Jamie Dundee or Downtown Bruno) getting ten lashes with a belt. Jamie Dundee is only 14 or so, but already he very obnoxious. I shouldn't pick on the kid since he doesn't have much experience, but it's just that everything he does is so over exaggerated that he looks like a bad actor in a high school play. Several times during the match he helped his dad and Todd by double teaming the heels while the ref was distracted. They chased Bruno a few times when he tried to interfere and a couple of times they caught him and punched him, but the crowd didn't even pop. Bruno barely sold the punches, going down very easy, no doubt due to his liquid lunch. The end came with all four men in the ring. Todd Morton had one of the RPM's in a roll up when ref Jerry Calhoun took a bump. Mike Davis grabbed a chain and coldcocked Morton. Gary Young hit the ring and Jamie tried to intercept him. Tommy Lane covered Morton and the ref recovered to toll the pin. The match went 11:44. At the end, Jamie took off his shirt for the lashes and Bruno whipped him four or five times (I've hit Kelly harder when I pretend to spank her) before one of the RPM's grabbed the belt. The faces then took off since that wasn't in the deal. It wasn't a bad match, but Morton didn't live up to everything I've heard about him other than he does look like Ricky. I gave the match a C- and that's generous considering all the annoying things that they put us through during and after the match.

The next match was to have been Fuller and Golden against Brickhouse and Jeff Jarrett, but due to the angle they shot Saturday morning, Fuller didn't work and Cactus Jack replaced him. Fuller got plenty of heat (the first real heat of the night). It was a decent match with Fuller getting plenty of licks in with his crutch. The end of the match came when Fuller jumped in the ring and tried to get the boot off Jeff. He succeeded, but it wasn't long before Jeff got it back and started cleaning house. RPM's did a run in and the crowd was hot. Cactus Jack at one point (this sounds confusing as I had a hell of a time trying to call the match in my tape recorder) got powder to throw in one of the faces' eyes, but it backfired and he got it. He had already juiced heavy and when he fell off the ring apron, he hit his head on the way down and was legit hurt (one of the faces went over to beat on him a bit, started to, then left him alone without even a little punch...that usually means it's serious). I gave the match a C, the run in and post match antics a B+ and a combo of a low B.

Eric Embry scored a clean pinfall over Bill Justin of Nature's Best. JD McKay sez "If this is Nature's Best, I want a refund!" Eric did a good job of carrying the youngster despite a chant of "Ken Mantell" from a certain ringside section. A suplex and a diving headbutt was the finisher. I gave it a D+ just due to Justin being so green.

Tommy Rich and Jimmy Valiant went to a no contest (I think) in a New York City Street fight. Pitiful. Best moves was the blade jobs both did. Rich hit a gusher early and Valiant ripped his forehead open but nothing came out so he had to keep slapping himself in the forehead (Gee! I could have had a V-8) till it finally started to flow. They brawled back to the dressing room, but these two don't even put on an entertaining brawl. This one was strictly for the bloodhounds, but evidently there weren't many present because there was no heat until run in time. It gets an F in my book.

The main event saw Texas vs Tennessee with Kevin and Kerry Von Eric, Steve Cox and Frank Dusek taking on Jerry Lawler, Bill Dundee, Jeff Jarrett and Eddie Marlin. Kevin wasn't in a mood to sell and Jeff

Jarrett decided he wasn't going to sell if Kevin didn't. That should tell you how this match went. With Kerry and Bill Dundee in the ring together, you got a good feel for just how small Dundee is, especially when they went to a collar to elbow hookup. I thought Dundee was going to break into a chorus of "Follow the Yellow Brick Road" any second. Neither team really wrestled as face or heel and the crowd, surprisingly, was split in their allegiance. The end of the match was an all out brawl with Eddie working over Dusek. Kevin came in from behind while the ref was busy with the other five guys and clobbered Eddie setting up the pin for Dusek. Surprise that Tennessee lost in Memphis! One other note...the first time Kevin stepped in the ring, almost the entire UAWF group started chanting "JUST SAY NO!" Jerry Lawler turned around and gave us a dirty look, then started laughing. I was too busy crawling under my seat. Confusing match for the most part, but I gave it a B-.

The matches in Memphis are broadcast live on the radio on Monday nights. UAWF member and Ring of Immortal inductee Boyd Pierce was invited mikeside to do the color for Lance Russell. Nice touch.

After the matches it was back to the hotel (in taxis again...can you imagine someone actually stealing a van that says DAYS INN on the side? Car thieves usually go for inconspicuous vehicles I thought) for the finals of the trivia competition. Meltzer, Brautigam and Randy Smith squared off in a game of Jeopardy! to determine the winner. Meltzer held the lead throughout but was tripped up by the final Jeopardy! answer (1st wrestler managed by Jim Cornette). Randy got the correct answer (Sherri Martel), Dave missed and it put them into a tie. Quickly, another question was made up with Randy getting the correct answer to become the 1988 Trivia champion of the UAWF.

About fifteen members gathered for an all nighter in which they watched videos, gossiped, traded stories, and much more. We departed the next morning (with the hotel adding about \$1000 more than we expected to our bill) with a lot of bleary eyed people. Monday, in the meantime got a B+.

I think the best part of the convention was the getting together of friends. Many of us had never met before, using letters and Ma Bell as the only source of communication. I know I cemented many friendships this weekend that should last a lifetime. The fellowship we enjoyed is something that words just can't do justice to. I'm sure there were some disgruntled people but for the most part, I think everyone left happy. If I do say so myself, we did one hell of a job for the first time. I gave the whole convention an A-. I got a lot of the credit for putting the thing together, but in reality, sixty other people made it special. Help was always no further away than a phone call. Everyone worked together for a common goal and the resulting success is going to be felt throughout the wrestling world, not only this year but in years to come as well. So many people gave their time, their money, and their advice that it would be impossible to list them all. It took a lot of time on my part, but each minute of preparation was well spent. I'm only sorry that the actually physical work of putting the thing together kept me from spending more time with my new found friends. Rushing around from all the nervous energy sometimes made me seem a bit stuck up, so I hope that anyone offended with that can understand. I listened more than I talked because there was so many interesting people with stories to tell. I thank you all for what ever part you had in the convention and look forward to meeting you all next year.

If you want to be a part of the UAWF and join in with Convention 89 (location to be announced towards the beginning of the year), you just need to become a member. It's \$15.00 for a single membership and additional members of your family may join for just \$2.00 each (dues may go up in the spring so now is the time). Four magazines a year are published along with you getting a birthday card on your birthday signed by a wrestler. Send dues along with your birthdate to UAWF, Box 215, Galesburg, IL 61402.

CONTINENTAL WRESTLING FEDERATION

The circumstances surrounding the departure of Eddie Gilbert, Missy Hyatt, and Paul E Dangeously get stranger and stranger. It is now being reported that Eddie's neck injury was not quite as severe as they had originally thought and that Eddie had exaggerated the injury to Continental owner David Woods. Both sides are offering their own versions, one of which was reported here last issue, the other here. Eddie had worked in Kansas City after he had told Woods that he couldn't work in Alabama. When questioned about his work for Geigel, Eddie at first denied the accusation, claiming it was his brother Doug. He later admitted it was him. When paychecks were issued to wrestlers after this incident, many, including Eddie and his close associates, were about half of the normal amount, forcing some sort of show of power and or unity. Timing on both parts was crucial as it is rumored that Eddie wanted out and had to force his hand before the Road to Birmingham show on October 3. On the other hand, Woods probably shouldn't have played his hand until after his big show. Another theory is that Woods used the big names on the hype for the card in an attempt to boost attendance without ever having any intention of having the names on the card to save some payroll expenses. Personally, I don't know which story to believe as I am not close to either side, and both versions make sense.

The Road To Birmingham is being considered a moderate success with around 1200 fans showing up on October 3 to see Dr. Tom Pritchard capture the CWF championship. This was not a real surprise as somehow some pre taped interviews leaked out and were broadcast prior to the tournament with Pritchard talking about winning the tournament. Several conventioners attended the show and supplied us with the results found in the results section.

By the way, here's a correction from last time as I had listed Wille B Hert as saying he would retire if he didn't win the tournament. It should have been Eddie Gilbert, but the point is moot now that Eddie is gone and Willie didn't win and is still around. Never mind.

Also on the card was a hair vs hair match that had some confusing stipulations. On all the TV shows they had been pushing it as also a \$25,000 (of Ken Wayne) vs an IROC-Z (of Davis'). I guess they didn't want Davis to give up both his hair and the car as the second stip was conveniently forgotten. Although Wayne didn't officially win the bout, the match ended when he cracked Davis over the head with a coke bottle (that HAD to hurt) then KO'd referee Randy Anderson with the razor that he then used to shave Davis' head. Both guys juiced pretty heavy and made it tough going to the razor, but I'm sure they finished the job in the dressing room. Interviews with Ken Wayne bragging about cutting Davis' hair also found their way onto TV a week early. Oops.

Bob Armstrong has taken over the book here and son Brad Armstrong has left Crockett and is headed back in more or less permanently. These small promotions that rely on family for talent and as booker sometimes have mass departures as recently observed however.

CWF will continue on FNN-Score for the time being. It had been rumored that FNN wanted no part of the promotion if Gilbert left because he was basically the only one connected with the promotion who was positive minded in his approach with the network. Other front office personnel were lax in mailing out tapes sending them first class instead of overnight, thus making it hard for the FNN people to broadcast the tapes on a regular and timely basis.

Rumored unrest among the wrestlers here appear to be just that. Paydays are improving slightly if only because the big names aren't around to collect their share. Perhaps if crowds dip because of no big names, so will the paydays accordingly. Best advice is to save the money while you can, because the bottom could fall out just about any minute.

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

The first Saturday Night's Main Event of the new season should be shown on NBC during the Halloween weekend. It will be taped from Baltimore on the 25th so we won't be able to carry news of it before you get to see it. NBC announced last week that it will be carrying more SNME than last year plus three prime time wrestling specials throughout the year. You'll recall that in February, they tried a special in prime time that we all thought would be in the top ten for the week and ended up at # 25 or something. We called it a bomb, but evidently it did well enough for the network to put its faith in to more ventures of this nature. The show (where Hogan lost his title) did win its time slot which says something. While the writers were on strike, the possibility of NBC carrying wrestling on a regular basis was quite high and this seems to be somewhat of a carryover from that situation. I've heard that Vince is thinking about going to the network with a weekly show and cancelling all his syndicated shows but at this point, that is not only premature, but stupid. Should the network suddenly can the show, Vince would be up the creek without a paddle. The only two things I can think of that might happen would be 1) No angles would be run on the syndicated show and it would be used only as a selling vehicle for live arena shows, and 2) Non-NBC stations carrying the show might be more quick to pull the plug in favor of alternate programming. The important thing is that Vince is managing to keep the name WWF in front of the people again, at least for another year. Deep down, I get this funny feeling that wrestling is going to take a major nose dive after all this with severe overexposure.

And least you have nothing else to be embarrassed by, NBC has also announced plans to carry the 1989 Shammies. I guess whoever made that decision didn't see the last show.

Vince is also hoping that this latest announcement in conjunction with NBC (not the Shammies...all the prime time stuff) will help to lure wrestlers from other promotions who are hanging on the fence. Flair is reportedly ready to go, but is waiting for his contract to run out in January. At least that is the scuttlebutt around all the locker rooms of some of the independent promotions.

A few of the guys got a working vacation traveling to Europe for some shows. I should be getting some results or other information on that as soon as they return.

Terry Taylor has joined Bobby Heenan's family in a unique way. With the departure of Hercules to the babyface side of the ledger, Heenan opened up a spot for a guy who has a little problem with his size, a little trouble with his win loss record and little ability. He then introduced Terry to Brother Love and us fans at home, calling him the little red rooster or something equally as asinine. No doubt we'll see another babyface turn soon.

Curt Hennig, on the other hand, seems to be having the time of his life playing the role of Mr. Perfect. They're introducing him as the kind of guy who is great at everything competitive with him sinking long puts on the golf course, shooting pool like Minnesota Fats, hitting home runs in a batting cage like Jose Canseco, and sinking baskets on a basketball court like the Knoxville Blue Bullets. He isn't aligned himself with a manager yet, but it seems that a heel in the WWF can't get by without one so expect that soon as well.

And can you believe this? Harley Race is contemplating a comeback? Just a few short months ago we were reporting that his life had almost ended as the result of a burst intestine. Word is that he will return within the next month to light duty. Several callers have figured out what is going to happen next with Race working as a babyface and feuding with Hennan and Haku. He can use the "tolling of the bell" to his advantage claiming that Heenan wrote him off as dead. As a baby he wouldn't have to take those crazy bumps that men his age shouldn't be taking in the first place.

FLASH IN THE PAN DEPARTMENT...When the Powers of Pain entered the WWF, they were the hottest thing going. Everyone thought they were the Road Warriors. Now people have figured it out that they aren't and things are very quiet. Why? A lot has to do with the Apter mags spilling the beans about them not being the Roadies which gives you some idea of how much weight that particular press carries. I'm also told that due to a certain story here in the Forum reasoning why they shouldn't be allowed to win the straps in the WWF had a lot to do with the subdued push they are getting.

George Steele has had some serious medical problems as of late and we can't be for sure why. I've heard about four different reasons and about the only thing that is agreed upon is that the situation is indeed life threatening. Our prayers are with George.

It probably won't be a real good idea to match up the British Bulldogs and the Rougeau Brothers in any matches in the near future unless a shoot is the object of the match. Recently, there was a dressing room brawl between Dynamite and one or both of the brothers over an incident where the Rougeaus shaved the head of a mentally/physically handicapped ring attendant. Of course, no one wants to talk about it on the record, even under the conditions of anonymity, but from the indications I've gotten, Ray Rougeau ended up on the short end of the deal with DK punching him out.

To clear up some confusion, Tully and Arn are in working as heels. We weren't sure last time around. They will be called the Brainbusters and their first scheduled work seems to be against the Rockers. Interesting that only in the WWF can you see the former AWA tag champs against the former NWA tag champs.

TV tapes were done last week in Fort Wayne Indiana and (I think) Dayton Ohio. At present, I have no information on what happened, but one of my sources said that with the number of specials and things happening with NBC, the syndicated show is going to little more than just follow up on angles shot on the big shows. The syndicated show will also be used to introduce new talent.

It's not yet time to panic, but attendance seems to be slipping in some key cities. Front office people are looking at why they aren't drawing and trying to come up with some answers. Hogan debuted in a Florida city recently to a less than half full house. Consensus is that the product isn't hot anymore and the few regulars in the cities they go to are starting to lose interest. The panic button hasn't been pushed yet because souvenir sales are still good. They continue to introduce new items which add considerable revenue to the coffers, but I'm told if the trend of down attendance continues, they will do some adjusting by way of pushes.

My own opinion of the down attendance is the current feuds. Ron Bass vs Brutus Beefcake is a "smart" fan's nightmare and the casual fan can't be impressed with it. Andre has lost his drawing power and pairing him off night after night with Savage as an opponent is hurting Randy more than Andre. Ted lost his drawing power when they destroyed him at Summer Scam. Hogan has turned himself in to a raving maniac who a lot of the casual fans I talk to at work seem to think that he's

turning bad. Maybe it's one of Vince's weird experiments that always seem to work out.

More news on Terry Taylor and his role. During the next few weeks, they'll be showing his matches with Heenan at ringside. Taylor will do stuff that will be almost right, but after Heenan "fine tunes" the move, it works all the better. One instance is where Terry has the scorpion on a jobber but the jobber won't submit. Heenan steps in and shows Terry how to reposition his hands and feet and immediately the jobber shrieks in pain and quits. Now for the mystery. Why the "little Red Rooster" tag? Because he's going to become extremely "cocky" after his training period.

Locally, Titan returns to Champaign (about 135 mile southeast of here) on November 5. Hogan headlines the card, but we won't be going. I figure that Mary and Kelly put up with a wrestling weekend in Memphis so we'll be attending a Kenny Roger-Dolly Parton concert the same night in Peoria. What a guy, huh?

They had let slip some information on the Survivor Series II coming up on Thanksgiving night, but the announced line up is on such shaky ground right now that they are holding back any further plans for another week or so. Do you realize that's less than six weeks away? There will definitely be four survivor matches with there being two singles teams and the tag team like they had last year. It is not known what the fourth match will be as last year it was the girls but this year they don't have but two girls who work regularly. We should have some concrete announcements by next issue at the latest.

And finally, the bad taste with Rick Rude's tights continue. He still wears Cheryl Roberts on the front (with his groin sticking out where her nose is) and Jake's likeness is on the rear end. It's a good feud and the guys are going all out in their matches it seems, but this face on the tights just kind of irks me for some reason. They've really never had Rude explain why the faces are there (we know it's to make Jake mad). I wonder if he'll continue to give airbrush artists work after this feud ends.

WORLD CLASS

The annual Cotton Bowl card is probably taking place as I type this page. I have the full line up now and hope to have the results by the results section.

The card opens with a trivia question with Tug Taylor going against Tony Torrez. Jimmy Valiant teams with a midget to go up against Tim Brooks and another midget (I'm assured that one of the midgets is NOT Bill Dundee). Japanese Women's champion Chigusa Nagayo who is on tour of the US will be wasted against Candi Divine. Super Black Ninja (Keiji Mutoh) takes on four men at once. In an all cowboy match it's Black Bart and Jimmy Jack Funk versus Blackjack Mulligan and Bill Irwin (I always thought Irwin was a biker). For the Texas belt, Iceman Parsons wrestles Kendall Windham. The Worth-las light heavyweight title is on the line as champ Eric Embry goes up against Jeff Jarrett. Kevin Von Eric is scheduled with Brian Adias. Bam Bam Gordy will be in a dog collar match with the Bostwani Beast. For the Tag belts, the Samoan Swat team with Buddy Roberts in their corner defend against Hayes and Cox (this belt has changed hands a few times in recent weeks).

The main event will feature a unification match with Lawler and Kerry. It's billed as a Texas Death Match with Tennessee rules. I dunno...you figure it out. Supposedly (according to the program) fall don't count, it's no DO and the match will continue until one champion can't answer the bell. They are really pushing the fact that only one man will walk out of the ring with both belts. Watching this series reminds me of the old Batman TV show where Batman and Robin always got themselves into a predicament at the end of one show that looked like there was no escape only to pull a trick out of their utility belts. They seem to be able to keep the endings fresh so far, but it seems like eventually they will paint themselves into that proverbial corner.

Evidently though, the corner isn't going to have paint around it. Friday the 21st, they return to the Sportatorium with the main event being Lawler and Jimmy Jack Funk vs "the undisputed world heavyweight champion" Kerry Von Erich and Michael Hayes. That's the word from the Sportatorium hotline late Saturday night. I would assume that means Kerry won the AWA belt, or at least in Texas he did.

Speaking of the Sportatorium, it has a new lease on life (pardon the pun) with the city agreeing to allow it to remain open as long as no actual food preparation takes place inside the building. Packaged food sales will be allowed.

Jerry Jarrett is rumored to be serious about purchasing the World Class group. There has been some negotiations but at this time the only portion available for sale is that part which is owned by Ken Mantell. I believe that amounts to about 30%. For the Von Erichs to get someone to buy that 30% could be a good scam for them as they would have the buyer's money to work with and lose at the same time as retaining control of the organization. Hopefully Jarrett learned from Mantell's mistake.

We've got an extra page since the Pacific Northwest report didn't make it in so let's cover the Cotton Bowl card. If we don't have room for it all, I'll list the results in the results section and just hit the highlights here.

In the main event Kerry squared off against Lawler. The program said "wrestlers can use anything they can carry except a gun or knife" but before the match began, Kerry grabbed the mike and said that they should get rid of all the foreign objects and have a match to decide the wrestling champion, not the street fight champ. Kerry pulls a roll of quarters out of his trunks and a stick out of his boot in good faith. Jerry then pulls a small piece of pipe out of his trunks and a coat hanger from his boot (I'm told this was hilarious). He motions to Kerry and Kerry takes off a weight lifting belt. Kerry motions back and Jerry relieves himself of an Abdullah the Butch model popsicle stick and a set of brass knucks. Jerry refused to take off his weight lifting belt claiming it was part of his wrestling gear. All of the confiscated objects are put in the wrestlers' respective corners and that became important.

The rest of the rules still applied and the first fall went to Lawler. They wrestled for about 5-6 minutes before the brawl began. Lawler grabbed his pipe and decked Kerry then fell on top of him for the pin. Kerry Juiced super heavy. Von Erich was given 5 seconds to recover from the pin and a ten count to answer the bell. He did.

The senario was repeated then only reversed with Kerry decking Lawler with a roll of quarters.

In the third fall, both guys had an object and the ref got hit with one of them. Kerry covered Lawler and no ref. Frank Dusek came in and counted the pinfall, then gave Lawler a ten count. He counted slow at first (one...two...three...) but then fast when he got to the end (eightynine) and awarded both belts to Kerry. Eddie Marlin came in to object and they replayed the scene that set up the TN-TX feud that we saw. The bottom line is that Kerry walked out with both belts. At least in Texas.

One other note while we have room. Jeff Jarrett won the light heavyweight belt from Eric Embry with a clean pinfall. Embry later turned subtle babyface and should be full fledged with in the next couple weeks.

RESULTS FROM ALL OVER

Note: Due to the lateness of the bulletin this time, we didn't take time to put results into chronological order (or take time to look up the spelling of that long word). We'll be back to normal next issue.

10/15 DALLAS (WCCW) - courtesy of "A. Friend"...Steve Casey beat Tug Tyler...Valiant and his midget beat Tim Brooks and his...Chiquisa over Divine...Super Black Ninja beat his four opponents...Blackjack and Irwin defeated Bart and Funk...Feeman downed Kendall Windham...Jarrett pinned Embry and won the Lt. Heavyweight championship...Kevin by DQ over Brian Adias...Gordy and Beast went DCOR...Hayes and Cox won the tag titles defeating the Samoan Swat Team...Kerry Von Erich beat Jerry Lawler...NOTES: Harvey Martin was in Hayes & Cox's corner and got into it with Buddy Roberts...Gordy and Beast did their best impression of Brody-Abby brawling all over the building....not as good though...Ninja and Kendo Nagasaki did a run in during Kevin-Adias match and Kevin did a stretcher job...Nagasaki claims that Fritz put his father out of wrestling in Japan during 50's or 60's thus the urge for revenge.

10/3 BIRMINGHAM (CWF) - courtesy of a host of convention goers....Willie B Hert won a battle royal... DWB beat Bullet...Pritchard pinned Kokina...Dutch Mantell drew Mr Wrestling II...Idol beat Gordy by DQ...Jerry Stubbs beat Tim Horner...DWB over Dutch Mantell...Stubbs beat Idol...Pritchard pinned Stubbs...Pritchard beat DWB to win CWF tournament...Ken Wayne shaved Danny Davis' head following a brawl that had no winner...NOTES: Most of the matches ended with a foreign object type ending including the final of the tournament...Fans didn't know who to cheer in many of the matches which had either heel vs heel or twener vs face...Mantell tried to play heel vs II but the fans cheered him anyway...Attendance was about 1200.

9/22 TRURO, NOVA SCOTIA (Grand Prix) - courtesy of Keith Ferguson...Wayne Gillis pinned Eddie Watts...Vinnie Valentino over Buddy Lane...Pual Peller beat Butcher Vachon...Beast beat Bob Brown...Beast won 8 man battle royal...Leo Burke defeated Rip Rogers...NOTES: Looks like Central States has moved far north...Valentino-Lane a scientific match...Butcher Vachon

not the original but could be relation, perhaps a nephew... Beast is the older brother of Leo Burke and spends most of his time training racehorses...this group's season ended (because of winter) on 9/26 and the champions at the end of the season were: International Heavy-weight Leo Burke...North American Tag Team-Leo Burke and Stephen Pettipas.

10/2 CHICAGO (NWA) - courtesy of Mike McCoy...Simmons over Rip Morgan (B-)...Rotundo beat Stallion (C)...Midnight Express drew Murdoch/Dusty (B)...Fantastics over Sheeps (A-)...Assassins by DQ over Nikita/Ivan (B)...Sting over Windham by DQ (A)...Flair by DQ over Luger (B+)...NOTES: Attendance 5000...Flair Luger had typical end with False finish after ref bump...Steiner got huge reaction especially after getting into it with Sullivan and Rotundo...Dusty was as bloody as he's ever been in Chicago or probably anywhere else.

9/17 LOS ANGELES (WWF) - courtesy of Andy Dragos...Taylor pinned Blair (C+)...Blue Blazer over Scott Casey (C+)...Hercules drew Tito (C-)...Savage over Andre by DQ (C-)...Bad News beat JYD (D)...HTM over Dingbat by COR ...Demolition ~~Defeated~~ Bulldogs (B)...NOTES: Attendance 10,000...lots of messed up endings as Blazer and Casey missed a roll up from ropes for their end and Hercules and tito was cut short by referee before the 20:00 had elapsed...match went only about 18:00. ...Heenan interfered for the DQ during Andre's match.

As you all should be aware by now, we've tried several systems at keeping results with few to no good luck. Reports via phone seem to get into print, but for some reason, printed results don't. Part of them get processed as subscriptions and trashed before we get the chance to use them. If you have any suggestions, let me know. In the meantime, if you would mark your envelopes on the outside RESULTS in the lower left hand corner, that may help a little. Send in results whenever you attend a card live. I would like to have this section with about 15-20 sets of results each issue. I'll try harder if you all do, fair enough?

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

Okay trivia buffs, we're back with more trivia. There was no trivia question last time out as I was too tired of making up questions for the convention. But here, just for you is part of the convention trivia contest. As mentioned the last round was played as a round of Jeopardy! with us giving the answers and the contestants supplying the questions. One of the categories was "THE NAMES THE SAME" and dealt with wrestlers who have namesakes outside of the wrestling business. For example, if the answer was "ROCK STAR" the correct response would have been "Who is Sting?". Understand? Here is the entire category from that portion of Jeopardy! and we'll have all the correct "questions" next time around. 100-Member of 1987 World Champs; 200-Politician who likes rice; 300-Frontiersman with a trendy hat; 400-Country wester-novelty singer he did "Ballad of the Blue Cyclone"; 500-leader of instrumental group from Nashville, he shares his name with two wrestlers. There are no prizes for correct answers, this is just for fun. Our contestants at convention couldn't answer the last two or the first one. Can you do better?

A correction from the Memphis report. They had originally signed Kerry to face Lawler in the cage on Monday night, but it would seem that has been postponed due to a tour by Tatsumi Fujinami. Fujinami will be in and Lawler will defend against him with the cage match coming in a couple of weeks. That leads me to believe the title change in Dallas was only for the state of Texas. Fujinami will also include Texas on his tour schedule.

A couple of sad notes that I thought I had covered but in going back over the last couple of issues, they just seemed to slip by. My apologies. First, LeRoy McGuirk past away on September 9. McGuirk wrestled and held a junior heavyweight title from 1939 through 1950. He was forced out of the ring by blindness suffered in a car accident. He was the promoter in the Ozarks which eventually became the old Mid South area which he sold to Bill Watts. McGuirk was 78 and is survived by daughter Mike who is the ring announcer on Titan's Wrestling Challenge.

The second death is LeRoy Brown who worked most

recently as one half of the Zambue Express with Ray Candy. Brown had suffered a stroke in late August and died a few days later on September 6. Our thoughts and prayers are with both families.

Plans for the 1988 Wrestling Forum yearbook are continuing. We want to make this the very best we've ever done and some members of the staff have suggested that we take one issue off from the regular Forum to devote more time to the yearbook project. What are your thoughts? What would you like to see in the yearbook other than the year end awards poll? In order to make this the best ever, we need to know what YOU want. Please let us know. We'll keep you posted and once again, the balloting for our year end awards begins in one month in the November 15 edition.

Cowboy Bob Orton is in trouble again it seems. There was an article from a Detroit newspaper with a columnist describing a flight back to the US after attending the Olympic games in Korea. On this particular flight was Bob Orton and he was upset that they had stopped serving him liquor. The gist of the story was the columnist calming him down and eventually boring him to sleep. When they got off the plane, there was a host of police waiting for Cowboy Bob. Orton was arrested here in Central Illinois about two years ago and put on probation by the court and ordered not to touch alcohol for one year. I can see that did a lot of good. He was convicted of driving under the influence.

Roddy Piper's new movie (entitled "They Live") is being heavily hyped on the NWA syndicated shows. This should not suggest anything as the movie distributor is the one who bought the commercial time. There has been talk of bringing in various wrestlers like Piper and Steamboat and others for one shot appearances like on the NWA PPV events. That could boost some sales, I would think if they would recognize the value of one shots.

Sorry for being so late. While in Memphis, I only got about one and a half pages or two actually typed. I think I'm getting old because the body is requiring more and more sleep. We should be back on schedule next time. Until then, keep smilin'. See ya.

SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE UPDATE

UP TO 229 FOR THIS ISSUE!

THANKS!

Jim

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Forgive me but I can't come up with entertaining ways everytime to tell you the color codes....
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